

WHEREAS, the Legislature has through Act 2006- 612 authorized the issuance of 1976 and prior Alabama license plates to vehicles that qualify as Vintage Vehicles pursuant to Section 40-12-290, et seq.; and

WHEREAS, questions will arise from county license plate issuing officials as to whether a specific license plate can be issued to a Vintage Vehicle;

THEREFORE, the following rule is adopted to assist county officials in the implementation of Act 2006-612.

**810-5-1-.242 Registration Procedures for Vehicles Registered Under Section 40-12-297. (NEW RULE)**

(1) For the purposes of this rule, the term “Vintage plates” shall refer to the original Alabama license plate registrations authorized under Section 40-12-297.

(2) The Department of Revenue will provide license plate issuing officials with Vintage plate decals to be affixed to lower portion of the Vintage license plate. The decals will contain a number, which must be entered into the registration record as the decal number. The decal and the motor vehicle registration receipt indicates that the vehicle to which the license plate is issued is properly registered in accordance with Section 40-12-297, Code of Alabama 1975. The motor vehicle registration receipt must be retained in the vehicle for possible presentation to law enforcement officials in accordance with the provisions of Section 40-12-260, Code of Alabama 1975.

(3) Although Alabama has at various times issued front and rear license plates to motor vehicles, the registration authorized under Act 2006-612 shall be displayed on the rear of the vehicle only.

(4) In examining a Vintage plate for possible issuance, the license plate issuing official shall determine if the license plate is legible, particularly the entire license plate number. If the license plate is rusted, paint missing, parts of the plate is missing, holes in the plate, etc., to the degree that law enforcement would have difficulty reading the plate from twenty feet, the issuing official shall refuse to allow the requested license plate to be issued to the vehicle. Provided, the applicant may subsequently restore the plate (or have the plate restored) to the degree that the plate is legible and present the restored license plate for examination and approval by the license plate issuing official.

(5) Furthermore, in examining a Vintage plate for possible issuance, the license plate issuing official shall determine if the license plate colors are the colors of the originally issued plate. In order to make this determination, the issuing official may check the Department of Revenue’s website to view color pictures of Alabama license plates from 1912 through 1976.

(6) Vintage plates shall be of the category that is appropriate to the type of vehicle being registered (examples: an Alabama automobile plate should not be issued to a truck or bus; an automobile plate may not be issued to a motorcycle). Accordingly, the issuing official may need to make inquiry to the Department website or to the Department to determine if any symbols shown on the plate are appropriate for the type vehicle being registered.

(7) As Alabama did not issue metal license plates in 1943, a vehicle designated as a 1943 year model may not be registered pursuant to Section 40-12-297. Furthermore, during World War II a decal was sometimes issued in lieu of a front license plate; in such cases the decal may not be used as a registration pursuant to Act 2006-612.

(8) In the event law enforcement officials find a license plate issued pursuant to Section 40-12-297 being used in a manner not authorized by Section 40-12-290 et seq., said vehicle operator may be subject to the sanctions authorized by Section 40-12-290 (e) and forfeit the Vintage plate decal on the license plate issued pursuant to Section 40-12-297.

(9) The provisions of Section 40-12-297 authorizing issuance of original Alabama license plates or restored or refurbished Alabama plates do not include reproductions or facsimiles of original Alabama license plates.

(10) Issuing officials may not authorize license plates with license plate numbers exceeding seven (7) characters. All characters to be shown on the registration receipts must be either alpha or numeric characters.

(11) In the event, a license plate issued pursuant to Section 40-12-297 subsequently becomes illegible, the registrant shall promptly restore the license plate to a legible status, or surrender the license plate to his/her county license plate issuing official. Provided, law enforcement may confiscate any license plate issued pursuant to Section 40-12-297 found to be illegible as evidence of the violation of this law section in an enforcement action against the operator of the vehicle displaying said illegible plate.

(12) Beginning with license plates issued in 1942, Alabama license plate numbering schemes were identical in many years. Thus, for example, a plate numbered 47-12345 could have been issued every year from 1956 through 1976. To eliminate the potential that two vehicles could have the same registration number, the provisions of Act 2006-612 have specific prohibitions against duplicate numbering, and authorize the Department to prevent duplicate numbering by recalling duplicated plate numbers.

(13) As with standard Vintage Vehicle license plates, in the event the vehicle displaying the original Alabama license plate is sold or otherwise

disposed of, the license plate with Vintage decal attached follows the vehicle to the new owner, who is responsible for timely transferring the vehicle registration into his or her name. However, if the new owner will not be using the vehicle in the manner authorized as a collector type vehicle, the new owner shall remove the original license plate and, upon surrendering the license plate to the issuing official, acquire a standard license plate for the vehicle within the specified number of days of acquiring ownership.

(14) If at any time the owner of a vehicle registered with an original Alabama license plate and Vintage plate decal elects to begin operating the vehicle in a manner inconsistent with the provisions of the Vintage Vehicle law, the vehicle must be registered with standard license plates before this use is begun and the original Alabama license plate with the Vintage plate decal must be surrendered to the license plate issuing official.

(15) In accordance with Act 2006-612, a vehicle owner displaying a Vintage Vehicle license plate may elect to register his or her vehicle with an original Alabama license plate and Vintage plate decal. In order to do so, the Vintage Vehicle license plate must be surrendered, and upon payment of the registration fee and issuance fee, shall be issued an original Alabama license plate and Vintage plate decal. Note that ad valorem taxes will not be collected when surrendering a Vintage Vehicle license plate and acquiring an original Alabama license plate and Vintage plate decal. A refund or credit will not be authorized for the fees previously paid for the Vintage Vehicle license plate.

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Authority: Sections 40-2A-7(a)(5), Code of Alabama 1975 and Act 2006-212.

History: